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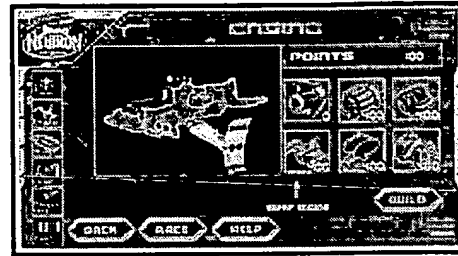


Plug (the Product) and Play

Advertisers Use Online Games to Entice Customers

By Ellen Edwards
 Washington Post Staff Writer
 Sunday, January 26, 2003; Page A01

Nickelodeon, the popular kids cable network, wanted to draw more attention to the launch of its "Jimmy Neutron" series last year. So during the summer it partnered with Quaker Oats, among others, to create the "Jimmy Neutron Gotta Blast" online racing game.



enlarge photo 

From Nickelodeon's Jimmy Neutron to the Army's terrorist busters, online games allow advertisers to capture attention. (www.nick.com)

To play, kids needed a code from inside a cereal box to access Nick's Web site and build their own rocket. To sweeten the offer, Nick promised that some of the rockets would be chosen at random to race on-air.

Kids called it fun. In marketing, it's called an advergame, the marriage of advertising to computer games. In Nickelodeon's summer-long promotion, more than a half-million people played its game, and the series launch was the highest-rated in the network's history. That's not a bad payoff for a modest investment.

Advergames can reinforce a brand image, build a database of information about its users, directly target the market they want to hit -- all very inexpensively when compared to what it costs to advertise in other media. That's one of the reasons they've taken off since being introduced in the late 1990s.

In creating advergames, marketers have jumped on a hot consumer trend: electronic gaming. Last year revenue from the electronic gaming industry (\$10.3 billion, according to the NPD Group) was bigger than movie ticket revenue (\$9.37 billion, reports Exhibitor Relations).

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Forrester Research, which studies the use of new technologies, projects that advergaming alone will be a billion-dollar-a-year industry by 2005.

"Marketers want to go where the audience is playing," said Keith Ferrazzi, CEO of Ya-Ya Media, an advergame producer.

Everyone is a target for advergames. The fastest-growing segment of the market is women ages 35 to 49 playing at work, according to media strategist Matthew Ringel, who with colleague Jane Chen coined the term "advergame" a couple of years ago. Chrysler and Jeep have designed games for the women's market. And that is one of the selling points of advergames -- they can be sharply tailored to the audience the advertiser wants to reach.

"There's a lot of experimentation going on right now," said Forrester Research principal analyst Charlene Li. "Television commercials are a much more emotional kind of marketing, but people skip the commercials with their TiVo, they walk out of the room and miss the 30 seconds, there are so many channels. It's very hard to penetrate.

"With games, they are absolutely absorbed in the games. With research, you can find out the type of people who are playing, and they're paying attention. There is very little evidence that people playing games are multitasking. And that's what marketers are interested in -- capturing their attention."

Gaming is so big that it is now being tracked by at least two competing companies -- Nielsen/NetRatings and Comscore Media Metrix.

Carolyn Clark, a senior NetRatings analyst, said that the company just started tracking games but that in the last few months Candystand.com, a LifeSaver candy game, is consistently getting more than 1 million unique visitors each month.

Candystand fulfills the first promise of advergames -- brand awareness.

"You can engage people in your brand for 15 to 20 minutes," said Ya-Ya's Ferrazzi. "And there's greater retention when it's interactive. Your cost per minute is also significantly lower than it is for a broadcast ad. Plus you reach the youth demographic."

Comscore Media Metrix's research shows that 59 percent of boys ages 13 to 17 who go online head to game sites. It's 62 percent for young men 18 to 24. For women the biggest group of game players is between the ages of 45 and 54. And that, analysts conclude, is an important indicator that games are going beyond kids.

Through advergames, companies can collect a database of personal information that allows them to "build a dialogue" with adult consumers. What that means is you register to play a higher level of the game, or

you fill out a survey, or you enter your score in a sweepstakes -- and they get your age, your location and your e-mail address. They know where you live. The "dialogue" consists of sending consumers advertising e-mails.

By federal law, advertisers are not allowed to collect information from kids younger than 13. But there's no prohibition against collecting information from their parents. If a child is playing advergames on the Hot Wheels site and wants to register for its Birthday Club, his parents must provide name, address, e-mail address and birth dates -- for both parent and child.

Advergames also have the advantage of spreading by what one marketer called "word of mouse." You like a game, so you e-mail it to a friend. They might get the game, or a link to the game site -- always with an ad. At virtually no cost to the marketer, the consumer is doing the work for them.

In the trade, it's called "viral marketing."

A Game for Every Market

When Mattel launched "My Scene" Barbie in November, the television commercials focused only on the dolls -- no cute little girls playing with them. This is Barbie with a bare belly and cell phone, Barbie aimed at older girls, ages 7 to 12, the ones already instant-messaging.

In the first ad, Barbie is in a cab yakking on her cell. A cute guy flags the cab down as she gets out. But -- OH, NO! She realizes as the cab pulls away that her prize possession, her very lifeline -- her cell phone -- is still in it.

"To Be Continued," ends the television ad.

But it's continued only on myscene.com. This is a "webisode" of the commercial, explains Cynthia Rapp, vice president of consumer products, creative, for Barbie. When a girl goes to myscene.com, as 1 million or so have done each month since the campaign began, they can view the second of what will be 12 "webisodes."

"This is the most integrated product and advertising campaign we have done," said Patrick Shandrick, a senior marketing manager at Mattel.

The campaign is new enough that there are no final numbers, but said Rapp, "All indications are that we are hitting the target" for sales.

And the girls do their part through viral marketing. They can send e-cards to friends online. Girls also follow the three friends in their "blogs," or Web logs, journals that have new entries all the time.

The flip side of the very girl-oriented myscene.com is americasarmy.com, the recruiting site of the U.S. Army. Visitors -- 90 percent of whom are male -- play a realistic shoot-'em-up game that the Army hopes will get them to think about enlisting.

Since it went online July 4, nearly 800,000 visitors have logged 6 million hours of play, according to the game's creator, Col. Casey Wardynski, director of the Army's Office of Economic and Manpower Analysis. Site traffic is heaviest on school holidays and after school hours, Wardynski said.

The game was created, he said, because recruiting was so expensive. "We're hoping with game technology we can get the cost way down." The goal is modest -- all the Army needs is 200 recruits in 12 months to break even, and according to Wardynski, it's on target to meet that goal.

But the Army is also planting seeds for the future. "Some of the kids who play it are four years away from joining," he said. "They are 15, 16, 17. We want to put the Army in the set of things they are thinking about."

Aaron Stahl, 16, a junior at Bethesda's Walt Whitman High School, found out about America's Army on another Web site and plays one to three hours every day. "I was amazed by how good it is," Stahl said. "But I'm not really going to fall for it. I'm not any more interested in joining the Army than I was before I played it. They try to get you to think the Army is cool. They try to get you to think you go on missions and blow up terrorists. That's far from reality."

But Stahl is still playing.

How AdvergAMES Grew

Dan Ferguson and his business partner Mike Bielinski started a small Internet marketing company in the late '90s.

"We noticed people passing things around on e-mail," Ferguson said, "jokes and that kind of thing." So in order to get the word out about their company, they created a game about Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky called "Good Willie Hunting." It had all the characters from the ongoing scandal. At the end of what was one of the earliest advergAMES was an ad for their company saying, "We do Web sites. Give us a call."

Their shop grew from five people to 40 in one year. "For two to three weeks our phones were ringing off the hook," Ferguson said.

Now they do advergAMES for, among many others, Nokia and M&Ms. The latter used a Blockdot advergame called "Flip the Mix" to announce its new color last year. In six months, the game was played 8 million times, on average between 45 and 60 minutes. Blockdot also creates a

Christmas game, a very subtle ad for itself. In 2001 that was Elf Balls, which became one of the top online games of the year, played 18 million times.

Advergames can be made for much less money than it takes to produce a game for a PC or a console. While a PC game that might have 80 hours of play could take three years and \$5 million to create, an advergame might take three to five months and cost between \$20,000 and \$250,000. Of course, its play time might be an hour or less -- not great for a game, but pretty good for an advertisement.

Companies easily tailor advergames to their objective.

Nickelodeon network's Web site, Nick.com, is ranked the No. 1 site for kids ages 2 to 14 by NetRatings, with more than 2 million unique visitors each week. Nick's research shows that 65 percent of those who visit the site head for the games, according to Jason Root, vice president and executive producer of Nick Online. In March, there will be a new SpongeBob SquarePants game to promote a major "SpongeBob" event called "The Lost Episode," with digital trading cards and points that can be turned into "e-collectibles," virtual giveaways that cost almost nothing.

Nike, with its advergames, has an even longer-term goal, said Dave Madden, whose company created Scorpion K.O., a soccer advergame for Nike. It's trying to increase interest in sports that will pay off in equipment sales.

"They show you skills and how to practice soccer," said Madden, executive vice president of sales and marketing for Wild Tangent. The subtext, of course, is buy Nike products.

Where Games Go Next

This is only the beginning.

"Where we see the growth," said Wild Tangent's Madden, "is not in stand-alone advergames, but in tying into larger global marketing campaigns that integrate television and print and even events all around the game concept."

Ya-Ya Media's Ferrazzi said his company is getting involved in product placement in games, just as movies have sold product placement for years. And Jeep bought into the Tony Hawk skateboard games. McDonald's and Intel both bought placements in the new Sims Online game. The Sims, which features a virtual family you create and manage, is the top-selling computer game franchise ever.

It's "very exciting" what Sims producer Electronic Arts "can do for Intel and McDonald's," said Forrester analyst Li. "They can tell [advertisers]

who are the people turning on the Intel computers, who the people are who are eating the McDonald's food. It's a really interesting way to go out and test a product. I can envision a time where instead of saying, 'Let's go market-test a product,' they say, 'Let's go Sims-test a product.' "

Matthew Ringel is president of Games Media Properties, a joint venture of the William Morris Agency and Ya-Ya that is designed to help companies reach consumers around "the video game lifestyle."

His company is planning events such as a People's Choice Game Awards and a touring games festival -- like Lollapalooza with games, competitions, votes for best game music, sexiest game character. Coming soon to a parking lot near you is a movable fest that will be known as a Gamesriot, where your kids -- and maybe even you -- will gather with other gamers. One advertiser, to be named shortly, will sponsor the tour.

"There's a gold rush with games," Ringel said. "We're making the picks and shovels."

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Dice GAMERS

THE NETWORK for DICE and social game players!

"BUNCO - n. (bun' ko) a fun, social dice game favored by small groups around the world. Generally consists of pure-luck dice rolling, food/drink, and chit-chat."

Information and Facts

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Q. So what is this game of BUNCO?

From a dedicated Bunco player who researched the game, I understand that Bunco has been around, and played, since the early 1900s. Once you've played it you'll probably get hooked too and will continue the tradition. What it is, is a game centered around three dice and usually three sets of four players averaging a standard group of 12. A game of pure luck; no real skill is required other than rolling the dice. However, since most of the settings are upbeat and social in nature involving a lot of eating, drinking, and talking, it helps if one tends to be multi-tasking! Being multi-tasking is even more important if you are the one at the table of four who has been elected to keep score, too. Other than that, it's meant to be a dice game that provides a reason for a group of people, often women, to gather and socialize.

I went to my first game about four years ago and was pleasantly surprised at the number of ladies who play this game in different groups each month. Many belong to multiple groups which means they play Bunco *weekly*. What an awakening! Little did I realize that this rather simple game of pure luck was so popular and had such an audience. But, like most who are "Bunco gamers", it becomes easy to understand that it's the atmosphere, friendships, and chance to have some genuine fun, makes it an enjoyable time demanding an encore!

Q. How can I start a Bunco group?

The basics are:









- **Twelve people** who are willing and generally available to play monthly, and able to "host" one month out of the year. (Certainly things come up so it's important to have substitutes.)
- A set of people who are willing to be a **substitute** for times when one of the 12 regular members are unable to attend. It's good to have at least three/four substitutes but more can be helpful. Also, when the opportunities arise for substitutes, it's a good idea to **call on different substitutes** so they're given a chance to play sometime during the year.
- You'll need a copy of the **playing rules**, **9 dice**, **some score sheets**, **writing tablets or paper**, **12 pencils**, and a **bell or ringer**. Additionally, if you use money or surprise "traveling" prizes, you'll need a **pouch**. A **box, bag, or container** to store your items is

helpful too. These are the basics.

- Then, someone in the group should **create, distribute, and maintain a roster** which contains names and phone numbers of all players and substitutes.
- **Define your playing days and times, and who will host** for each month. Many meet on a certain day of each month (e.g. second Thursday of each month). If possible, it's helpful to layout all the playing dates for the upcoming month (set up as many in advance as is comfortable for your group. Ours generally plans out one year at a time.) This information can be added to your roster list, perhaps on the back, so all game information is together.
- **Do keep in mind that if you cannot locate 12 people, then simply start your group with 8.** Sets of four people work best in this game so if you find four more interested people once you're established, then add them. Or, once you get your group started, you can decide whether or not to grow larger.

Q. How is it played?

This is a simplified outline to give you the idea of how the plays work.

- First, **refer to the Rules page** for some actual rules. There are also some additional rule versions on a site called the Official Bunko Rules. It's also got many versions listed on an Alternate Bunko Rules page. Once you have a feel for the rules (and don't wait until you feel like an expert...it's really not hard), you're ready to play!
- **In general**, you have **three tables of four people** who are **teamed up** in sets of two. At a table, the two players facing each other are a teamed pair. **The object** is to roll for specific combinations of dice and accumulate points.
- **To start**, the head table rings the bell and you begin the first round by rolling for "ONES" . A player is given a chance to roll once; if their roll contains a "ONE"  they accumulate **1 point** for each "ONE" rolled. Then, they roll again and only continue rolling as long as they roll a "ONE". If they roll and it doesn't contain a "ONE", then the next player is given the dice and rolls...and so on.
- **During the round, points can be accumulated in some additional ways.** If you roll three-of-a-kind of another number, say "FOURs"   , you accumulate **5 points** and allowed to continue rolling.
- **To win**, a person can (1) **roll a "BUNCO"**, OR (2) **accumulate 21 points** before another table does. A BUNCO would be when a player rolls three of the number in that round, e.g. three "ONES"   . This lucky person would yell, "BUNCO" to signal to other players that the round is done, OR, if a pair has won because of reaching 21 points first, they would yell, "GAME" to signal the end of the round.
- **At the end of a round**, each table counts up the points according to the paired teams and the pair with the most points stay at the table. The team with the low points at each table gets up and moves to the next table (sometimes called "lossers leave" rotation).

Q. Prizes or Winnings


This is where I've heard of many versions used. Some groups play with prizes and some with money.

- A prize version can consist of the hostess accumulating a set of silly booby prizes or nice items and they award winning levels of: most buncos, most wins, most losses, 50% wins & 50% losses, and sometimes a consolation prize for one or more others. The "traveling" prize can be a special booby prize, or something nice. I've even heard of taking home a symbolic stuffed animal for the month as another funny version of a traveling award. If the hostess is using a special **theme** for the party (e.g. Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, etc.) the prize

may be something that represents that theme.

- A money version can consist of \$5.00 for each of the 12 people for the game fund, plus \$1.00 for the traveling fund. When all the moneys are pooled together, the larger winning fund should be $\$5.00 \times 12 = \60.00 , and the traveling fund should be $\$1.00 \times 12 = \12.00 . Once the playing time is done for the evening, winnings are disbursed something like this to the person with: \$20.00...most buncos, \$15.00...most wins, \$12.00...most losses, \$8.00...50% wins & 50% losses, \$5.00 from a name pulled from those left who didn't win any thing else. The remaining traveling fund of \$12.00 goes to the traveling winner. (See the topic Q. What is "traveling"? for more details on how that's won.)

Q. What is "traveling"?

The traveling fund or prize is often considered a separate prize that is won at the end of the game. Some groups set aside \$1.00 each for a total of \$12.00 combined, or the hostess purchases a small silly or nice (inexpensive) prize and places it in the "traveling pouch". To win this pouch a player has to roll three "TWOs"  (or another trio of numbers that are not a BUNCO) and yell "TRAVELING"! The pouch transfers (usually as a toss through the air!) to the player with this roll. The next player who rolls three "TWOs" repeats the yell and the person who had the pouch has to toss (or transfer) the pouch to the new winner. The process continues until the last round is played and playing time/evening comes to an end. The last person holding the pouch gets to keep the winnings or prize. (Note: remember the pouch is not a part of winnings; it needs to stay with the game supplies!)

Alternate versions of this are played too. I'm aware of one group that designated a different set of numbers. For example, instead of three "TWOs", they play for three "ONEs". But, most everyone who I've talked to usually follows the three "TWOs" pattern.

Q. Hosting a party with a theme.

Some of our games have been centered around a theme. We've had Valentine's Day, Mardi Gra, St. Patrick's Day, Cinco De Mayo, Oktoberfest, and of course, Christmas themes. If you decide to add this additional "spice" to your party, just add some time to your calendar for preparation. It will be no fun if you exhaust yourself and cannot enjoy the fun too! Having a theme certain can add to your gathering spirits but remember not to out-do yourself. The goal is to have fun....Here's some highlights of the party themes mentioned earlier:

- *Valentine's Day* - Serve food dyed in colors of pink or red. Chocolates, Valentine decorated cake. Pink punch. For table snacks, have conversation hearts, (Valentine colors) M-n-M's, and some assortment of valentine candies.
- *Mardi Gras* - Serve some New Orleans style snacks or meal; rice and beans with spicy sausage. Use fancy eye masks and have folks dress up in fancy attire. Lots of beads are a must! Serve a special "king" cake complete with luck baby inside. "Hurricane" punch I've heard is suited. For table snacks, have (multi-colored) M-n-Ms or Skittles, hot spicy peanuts, and type of "beaded" candy.
- *St. Patrick's Day* - Serve Corn Beef and cabbage, or perhaps an assortment of corn beef sandwiches. Irish beer or a green dyed punch. Green attire works perfectly and perhaps that luck-of-the-Irish will reflect in the game?! For table snacks, pistachios, and assorted green candies of course.
- *Cinco De Mayo* - Prepare and serve Mexican influenced dishes or snacks. Margaritas (virgin or the real kind), Mexican coffee or beer. For dessert, a flan is always the choice. For table snacks, have red hot Tamale candies, pistachios, and multi-colored M-n-M's.
- *Fourth of July* - BBQ ribs or hamburgers, potato salad, and corn-on-the-cob. Apple pie with

home-made vanilla ice cream. Any American brew will do. For table snacks, peanuts, popcorn, and Cracker Jacks!

- *Octoberfest* - Serve german kiboska, with sauerkraut, with German beer. Apple cider and Apple pie is also a warm and wonderful treat. For table snacks, serve candy corns, popcorn and (the seasonal halloween colors) M-n-M's.
- *Christmas* - A fancy assortment of holiday dishes: ham with gratin potato dish. Holiday red punch, spiked coffee, or hot apple cider. Have people come dressed fancy or in red/green. (The December "Christmas" meeting is when our group invites the husbands to join us so that game is a large, somewhat fancy, event!) For table snacks, serve (Christmas colors) M-n-M's, and an assortment of your favorite holiday candies. Bring an ornament and have an ornament exchange at the end.

Q. What do some of these terms mean?...Definitions

Bunco - (1) Term for the fun dice game enjoyed by groups accross the globe. (2) Term for the occurance of rolling three-of-a-kind of a certain number in a round. (3) also, see *Bunko*.

Bunko - Means the same as "Bunco" and both terms are used interchangeably. It is suggested that this is the true spelling of the game.

Ghost - When you are short a player, it's the name given to the missing person. Since you need four people playing at a table and you are missing one, you "pretend" there's a "ghost" playing as a substitute. The ghost's teammate across the table will do the rolling for their team, and can usually take credit for any of the ghost's buncos or winning rolls during the round. (Having a ghost as a partner can be very rewarding!)

Round - When players start rolling for a given number, say "ONEs" and continue rolling until someone wins. A new round has said to begun after players have been reseated and are beginning to roll for a new number, say "TWOs"

Set - A set is when players play six rounds in which they have played for ONEs, TWOs, THREEs, FOURs, FIVES, and SIXs. It is common to play two-four sets during one night of play.

Traveling - Term used rolling three "TWOs" or any trio of non-BUNCO numbers, regardless of what number you are rolling for in a round.

Tracking...Last update: 1/24/00

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ALTERNATE BUNKO RULES

After someone found The Official Bunko Rules page, they shared with me via email their own rules. These might provide a fun alternative for when Bunko gets boring. (Don't ask me when that might be :)

Thanks for the information. These rules are a little different from the way that we have been playing Bunko. We play this way:

==> Same setup: 1 table per 4 people, 3 die per table and 1 score sheet per person.

==> Prizes: Everyone pays \$5.00 to play. Money is divided among the following categories: Most Bunkos, Most Wins, Last person with Bunko (i.e. Traveling Bunko - we have a stuffed animal called "The Bunko Bunny"), Most Losses, and Consolation drawing (if all tables were full). No one person can collect more than one category (this is where we have had some heated discussions). For example, if you have both the most wins and most bunkos, you can only claim one prize category and usually it is the higher pay-out of the two. We have come up with a lot of ties in our categories and we have the winners decide if they want to roll off or split the prize money.

==> Play is accomplished by throwing all three die at the same time. Points are accumulated by rolling the number of that round. We play 4 games, consisting of 6 rounds. Each game starts with the rolling of ones, then two, threes, fours, fives and then finally sixes. If the round you are playing involves rolling fours and you roll 3-fours, then that is a BUNKO and is worth 21 points. If you roll three of any other kind (3-ones, 3-twos, 3-threes, 3-fives, 3-sixes) during your fours round, you score 5 points and continue rolling. Each four that you roll is worth 1 point. You continue rolling until you don't roll a four or three-of-a-kind anymore.

==> Players sit at the table, with partners sitting across from each other. We also have a table ranking (head table, middle table and loser table) and we rotate the winners in the same way. We change partners after each round, even at the head table. The round continues until one of the teams at the head table reaches 21 points (which if a BUNKO was called at the head table, could be just one roll of the dice).

The round has been completed and winners mark a win on their score sheet, and losers mark their loss.

We also have a space on our score sheets to keep track of the number of BUNKO's that a person rolled.

==> We rotate each month on location of the game. Hostess usually provides munchies, or what ever she feels like serving. I served chilli when it was my turn. We also use a bell at the head table to end play of a round. We usually take a break during the second and third game for eating, getting drinks refilled and to use the bathroom. We have people bring what they would like to drink, so as not to burden the hostess with anything else to worry about when preparing for the party. Again, thanks for the information and if you have any questions about our rules just email me at xxxxxxxx@xxx.xxx.

MORE UN-OFFICIAL BUNKO RULES

Since the introduction of my Official Bunko Rules page, I have been sent a few alternate versions of Bunko Rules. I am including these, mostly because Teri (who sent them to me) is so dang nice... She has even played Bunko as a charity event!! She claims they have been play tested in several states and have been found to be fun.

Still, I haven't tested them myself, so I cannot offer any warranty. Caveat Utilitor!



BUNKO RULES

Setup

- 12 players in multiples of 4
- 1 table per 4 people (each table is designated: Table One, Table Two, and Table Three)
- 3 die per table (stored in Bunko Box)
- 1 Bunko Score Sheet per person (stored in Bunko Box)
- blank paper and pens or pencils on each table to keep score during each round (stored in Bunko Box)
- bell - placed at Table One (stored in Bunko Box)
- Traveler (a stuffed animal on loan from hostess)

- Hostess gift (costing no more than \$10. - provided by Hostess for person holding the Traveler at the end of the game)
- Refreshments (provided by Hostess)
- Prizes (provided by players)

Basic Play

Play is accomplished using all three die. All three are rolled at the same time. The bell is rung from Table One to signal the beginning of a round. The person sitting across from you is your team mate for the round, there are two teams per table. A player at each table begins rolling the die.

During round 1, the goal is to roll one's, (round 2 - roll two's, etc.) A point is gained for the team for each time the player rolls a one. The player may continue to roll and accumulate points as long as player continues to roll one's. (two's for round 2, etc.). After playing rounds 1-6, repeat two more times for a total of 18 rounds. Someone at each table keeps score for the two teams (we/they) during each round using the blank paper provided. When a player stops rolling the number of the round (round 1 - one's, round 2 - two's, etc.), the die go clockwise to the next player and so forth until the bell is rung from Table One signaling that the round is over.

When the bell is rung, all playing ceases unless a player has rolled a number from that round - then that player may finish her play.

Keeping Score

Each time a player rolls the correct number for the round, her team gets one point. Each time a player rolls the correct number for the round on all three die, it is a Bunko and her team gets 21 points.

The player that rolls a Bunko marks her Bunko Score Sheet with a 'B' beside that round. Each player must keep track of the number of Bunkos she rolls.

Each time a player rolls three of any other number (all three die are the same number - just not the number of the round), that team gets 5 points and the player may continue to roll.

Each time a player rolls three one's (regardless of the round), she calls out "Traveler" and she gets to hold the Traveler (stuffed animal on loan from the Hostess). The person holding the Traveler at the end of the game wins the Hostess gift provided by the Hostess.

Table 1 determines when the round is over. The first team at Table One to reach a score of 21 wins the round and the bell is rung signalling the end of the round. The other two tables may have higher scores (depending on the rolling).

At the end of each round, each player marks that round on her Bunko Score Sheet with a 'W' if her team won or a 'L' if her team lost.

Partners are changed after each round. The winning team at Table One remains, the losing team at

Table One goes to Table Three. The losing team at Table Two remains, the winning team at Table Two advances to Table One. The losing team at Table Three remains, the winning team at Table Three advances to Table Two. Players remaining at the tables after each round decide who will change seats so that new teams are formed for the next round.

Prizes

At the end of the evening, players add up their wins, losses, and Bunkos and mark them at the bottom of the Bunko Score Sheet. Prizes are:

- Most Wins
- Second Most Wins
- Third Most Wins
- Most Losses
- Most Bunkos
- Traveler - Hostess Gift
- Consolation Prize (anyone who hasn't yet won a prize, folds their Bunko Score Sheet and puts it in the Bunko Box and the Most Wins winner pulls out the name of the Consolation Prize winner)

Note: There are 7 prizes for 12 players (odds of winning are good). No one gets two prizes. Ties are broken by dice roll.

Hosting Bunko

The Hostess is responsible for taking home the Bunko Box from the previous month's game and setting up (as described above). She is also responsible for sending out a reminder/notice (either written or by phone) of the next meeting date. Each player is responsible for providing a sub when she can't make it. If player can't find a sub, the Hostess will need to secure a sub so that there are 12 players for each game.

Schedule and Roster

Each player will receive a roster of the players and subs, and a schedule. We will meet the last Monday of each month except when there is a conflict (i.e. May/Memorial Day). We will meet the Monday prior to that in the months where there is a conflict.

Due to Thanksgiving and Christmas, the November/December meeting will be combined and we will meet the beginning of December. We won't meet in July due to summer vacations. We meet 10 times a year.

EVEN MORE UN-OFFICIAL BUNKO RULES

A correspondent sent me these rules, and I insert them here to show another set of rules, and to show how wide-spread Bunko is. :-)

I have just moved from Okinawa, Japan to Corpus Christi, TX and while in Okinawa I enjoyed playing

Bunko very much so when I was asked to play with some friends here, I was thrilled. When I got there, I found out they play very differently than the military wives play. Here are the rules I learned.

Setup: 4 people per 1 table, 3 die per table, head table with bell, 1 score sheet per person to keep track of most wins, losses, bunks, 3 of a kinds, and snakes. Also there is a score sheet per table to keep track of US and THEM points.

Prizes: Everyone pays \$10 to play. The hostess buys prizes for most Bunkos, most wins, most losses, most 3 of a kinds, and most snakes with Bunkos having the most monetary value. She also buys consolation prizes for everyone that didn't get a "big" prize. So everyone goes home with a gift. The traveling Bunko is usually a stuffed animal that goes home with the last person that had a Bunko. Also, no one can take home more than one prize. They get the biggest prize that they earned and if there is a tie then there is a roll off.

Play: It is the same as your Alternate Bunko Rules except we don't roll for 1s. If you roll three 1s at any given time during the game it wipes out your teams score and you have to count it as a Snake. The other point that I didn't find in your Alternate rules is that we don't grab for the Bunko. If the person roles a Bunko then their team gets it and no one is allowed to steal it away.

STILL MORE UN-OFFICIAL BUNKO RULES

The fellow who played this version calls it "Combat Bunko". He also sent a nice scorecard in Word format.

We played with the official Bunko rules with a few variations. 1. We don't use the wipeout rule. 2. Any player who rolls a triple 1-5 gets to continue rolling. No points are awarded. 3. Bunko's are worth 6 points, but each die is worth 2 points and whoever gets a die gets the points. Yes, the person rolling the bunko could end up with no points, but still gets credit for the bunko. 4. We used the Traveler (a small yellow stuffed elephant). Thrown as hard as possible at the person yelling bunko. 5. We gave awards for: Most Wins Second Most Wins Most Bunko's Most Losses Person who ended up with the traveler 6. Cost \$3.00 per person to play. All money given out as prizes.

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